

Bass. Let me choole,
For as I am, I live vpon the racke.

Por. Vpon the racke *Bassanio*, then confesse
What treason there is mingled with your loue.

Bass. None but that vglie treason of mistrust.
Which makes me feare the enioying of my loue:
There may as well be amitie and life,
Twene snow and fire, as treason and my loue.

Por. I, but I feare you speake vpon the racke,
Where men enforced doth speake any thing.

Bass. Promise me life, and ile confesse the truth.

Por. Well then, confesse and liue.

Bass. Confesse and loue

Had bene the verie sum of my confession:

O happie torment, when my torturer

Doth teach me answers for deliuerance:

But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

Por. Away, then, I am lockt in one of them,
If you doe loue me, you will finde me out.

Nerrissa and the rest, stand all aloofe,

Let musicke sound while he doth make his choise,

Then if he loofe he makes a Swan-like end,

Fading in musique. That the comparifon

May stand more proper, my eye shall be the streame

And watric death-bed for him: he may win,

And what is musique than? Than musique is

Euen as the flourish, when true subiects bowe

To a new crowned Monarch: Such it is,

As are those dulcet sounds in breake of day,

That creepe into the dreaming bride-groomes eare,

And summon him to marriage. Now he goes

With no lesse presence, but with much more loue

Then yong *Alcides*, when he did redeeme

The virgine tribute, paid by howling *Troy*

To the Sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice,

The rest aloofe are the Dardanians wiues:

With bleared visage come forth to view

The issue of th'exploit: Goe *Hercules*,

Liue thou, I liue with much more dismay

I view the fight, then thou that mak'st the fray,

Here Musicke.

*A Song the whilst Bassanio comments on the
Caskets to himselfe.*

Tell me where is fancie bred,

Or in the heart, or in the head:

How begot, how nourished.

It is engendred in the eyes,

With gazing fed, and Fancie dies,

In the cradle where it lies:

Let vs all ring Fancies knell.

He begin it.

Ding dong, bell.

All. Ding, dong, bell.

Bass. So may the outward shewes be least themselves

The world is still decci'd with ornament.

In Law, what Plea so tainted and corrupt,

But being season'd with a gracious voice,

Obscures the shew of euill? In Religion,

What damned error, but some sober brow

Will blesse it, and approue it with a text,

Hiding the grossenesse with faire ornament:

There is no voice so simple, but assumes

Some marke of vertue on his outward parts;

How manie cowards, whose hearts are all as false

As flayers of sand, weare yet vpon their chins

The beards of *Hercules* and frowning *Mars*,

Who inward searcht, haue lyuers white as milke,

And these assume but valors excrement,

To render them redoubted. Look on beautie,

And you shall see 'tis purchast by the weight,

Which therein workes a miracle in nature,

Making them lightest that weare most of it:

So are those crisped snake golden locks

Which makes such wanton gambols with the winde

Vpon suppos'd fairenesse, often knowne

To be the dowrie of a second head,

The scull that bred them in the Sepulcher.

Thus ornament is but the guiled shore

To a most dangerous sea: the beautious scarfe

Vailing an Indian beautie; In a word,

The seeming truth which cunning times put on

To intrap the wisest. Therefore then thou gaudie gold,

Hard food for *Midas*, I will none of thee;

Not none of thee thou pale and common drudge

Twene man and man: but thou, thou meager lead

Which rather threatnest then dost promise ought,

Thy palenesse moues me more then eloquence,

And here choofe I, joy be the consequence.

Por. How all the other passions fleet to ayre,

As doubtfull thoughts, and rash imbrac'd despaire:

And shuddring feare, and Greene-eyed ieaousie.

O loue be moderate, allay thy extasie,

In measure raine thy ioy, leant this excess,

I feele too much thy blessing, make it lesse,

For feare I surfeit.

Bass. What finde I here?

Faire *Portia* as counterfeit. What demie God

Hath come so neere creation? moue these eies?

Or whether riding on the bales of mine

Seeme they in motion? Here are seuer'd lips

Parted with finger breath, so sweet a barre

Should sunder such sweet friends: here in her haire

The Painter plaies the Spider, and hath wouen

A golden mesh to intrap the hearts of men

Faster then gnats in cobwebs: but her eies,

How could he see to doe them? hauing made one,

Me thinks it should haue power to steale both his

And leaue it selfe vn furnisht: Yet looke how farre

The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow

In vnderprising it, so farre this shadow

Doth limpe behinde the substance. Here's the scroule,

The continent, and summario of my fortune.

You that choofe not by the view

Chance as faire, and choofe as true:

Since this fortune fals to you,

Be content, and seeke no new.

If you be well pleas'd with this,

And hold your fortune for your blisse,

Turne you where your Lady is,

And claime her with a louing kisse.

Bass. A gentle scroule: Faire Lady, by your leaue,

I come by note to giue, and to receiue,

Like one of two contending in a prize

That thinks he hath done well in peoples eies:

Hearing applause and vniuersall shout,

Giddie in spirit, still gazing in a doubt

Whether those peates of praise be his or no.

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So thrice faire Lady stand I euen so,

As doubtfull whether what I see be true,

Vntill confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

Por. You see my Lord *Bassanio* where I stand,

Such as I am; though for my selfe alone

I would not be ambitious in my wish,

To wish my selfe much better, yee for you

I would be trebled twenty times my selfe,

A thousand times more faire, ten thousand times

More rich, that only to stand high in your account,

I might in vertues, beauties, liuing, friends,

Exceed account: but the full summe of me

Is sum of nothing: which to terme in grosse,

Is an vnlesioned gillie, vn schoold, vnpractis'd,

Happy in this, she is not yet so old

But she may learne: happier then this,

She is not bred so dull, but she can learne;

Happiest of all, is that her gentle spirit

Commits it selfe to yours to be directed,

As from her Lord, her Gouverneur, her King.

My selfe, and what is mine, to you and yours

Is now conuerted. But now I was the Lord

Of this faire mansion, master of my seruants,

Queene ore my selfe: and euen now, but now

This house, these seruants, and this fame my selfe

Are yours, my Lord, I giue them with this ring,

Which when you part from, leaue, or giue away,

Let it preface the ruine of your loue,

And be my vantage to exclaime on you.

Bass. Maddam, you haue bereft me of all words,

Only my blood speaks to you in my vaines,

And there is such confusion in my powers,

As after some oration fairely spoke

By a beloued Prince, there doth appeare

Among the buzzing pleased multitude,

Where euery something being blent together,

Turnes to a wilde of nothing, tane of ioy

Exprest, and not exprest: but when this ring

Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence,

O then be bold to say *Bassanio*'s dead.

Ner. My Lord and Lady, it is now our time

That haue stood by and seene our wishes prosper,

To cry good ioy, good ioy my Lord and Lady.

Gra. My Lord *Bassanio*, and my gentle Lady,

I wish you all the ioy that you can wish:

For I am sure you can wish none from me:

And when your Honours meane to solemnize

The bargain of your faith: I doe beseech you

Euen at that time I may be married too.

Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

Gra. I thanke your Lordship, you gaue got me one.

My eyes my Lord can looke as swift as yours:

You saw the mistres, I beheld the maid:

You lou'd, I lou'd for intermission,

No more pertaines to me my Lord then you;

Your fortune stood vpon the caskets there,

And so did mine too, as the matter falls:

For wooing heere vntill I swer againe,

And swearing till my very rough was dry

With oathes of loue, at last, if promise last,

I got a promise of this faire one heere:

To haue her loue: provided that your fortune

Atcheiue'd her mistresse.

Por. Is this true *Nerrissa*?

Ner. Madam it is so, so you stand pleas'd withall.

Bass. And doe you *Gratiano* meane good faith?

Gra. Yes faith my Lord.

Bass. Our feast shall be much honored in your marriage.

Gra. Weele play with them the first boy for a thousand ducats.

Ner. What and stake downe?

Gra. No, we shal nere win at that sport, and stake downe.

But who comes heere? *Lorenzo* and his Infidell?

What and my old Venetian friend *Salerio*?

Enter Lorenzo, Iessica, and Salerio.

Bass. *Lorenzo* and *Salerio*, welcome hether,

If that the youth of my new interest heere

Haue power to bid you welcome: by your leaue

I bid my verie friends and Countymen

Sweet *Portia* welcome.

Por. So do I my Lord, they are intirely welcome.

Lor. I thanke your honor; for my part my Lord,

My purpose was not to haue seene you heere,

But meeting with *Salerio* by the way,

He did intreate mee past all saying nay:

To come with him along.

Sal. I did my Lord,

And I haue reason for it, Signior *Antonio*

Commends him to you.

Bass. Eie I ope his Letter

I pray you tell me how my good friend doth.

Sal. Not sicke my Lord, vnlesse it be in minde,

Nor wel, vnlesse in minde: his Letter there

Wil shew you his estate.

Opens the Letter.

Gra. *Nerrissa*, cheere yond stranger, bid her welcom.

Your hand *Salerio*, what's the newes from Venice?

How doth that royal Merchant good *Antonio*?

I know he vvil be glad of our successe,

We are the *Lafons*, we haue won the fleece.

Sal. I would you had vpon the fleece that hee hath

lost.

Por. There are some shrewd contents in yond same

Paper,

That steales the colour from *Bassanio*'s checke,

Some deere friend dead, else nothing in the world

Could turne so much the constitution

Of any constant man. What, worse and worse?

With leaue *Bassanio* I am halfe your selfe,

And I must freely haue the halfe of any thing

That this same paper brings you.

Bass. O sweet *Portia*,

Heere are a few of the vnpleasant 'ft words

That euer blotted paper. Gentle Ladie

When I did first impart my loue to you,

I freely told you all the wealth I had

Ran in my vaines: I was a Gentleman,

And then I told you true: and yet deere Ladie,

Rating my selfe at nothing, you shall see

How much I was a Braggart, when I told you

My state was nothing, I should then haue told you

That I vvas worse then nothing: for indeede

I haue ingag'd my selfe to a deere friend,

Ingag'd my friend to his meere enemy

To feede my meanes. Heere is a Letter Ladie,

The paper as the bodie of my friend,

And euerie word in it a gaping wound

Issuing life blood. But is it true *Salerio*,

Hath